10. NAME(S) OF STRUCTURE
State Bridge Number 808

11. PHOTOS (W/ FILM ROLL & FRAME NO.) AND SKETCH MAP OF LOCATION
22A:5-9

22A:7

12. SOURCES

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Federal Writers Project. Delaware: A Guide to the First State. (New York: Viking Press, 1938).
Carter, Dick. The History of Sussex County. Georgetown, Delaware: Community Newspaper Corp., 1976.
Hancock, Harold Bell. The History of Sussex County, Delaware. [s.l. : s.n.] 1976.
Delaware State Archives. Sussex County Road Papers 1875-1940.

13. INVENTORIED BY:	AFFILIATION	DATE
P.A.C. Spero & Company with Kidde Consultants for Delaware DOT		April-November 1988

HABS/HAER INVENTORY

See "HABS/HAER Inventory Guidelines" before filling out this card.

1. NAME(S) OF STRUCTURE
State Bridge Number 808

2. LOCATION
Route 197 over Broadkill Creek
Milton, Sussex County, Delaware

3. DATE(S) OF CONSTRUCTION
c. 1920-1930

4. USE (ORIGINAL/CURRENT)
Vehicular

5. RATING
CS

6. CONDITION
Fair

7. DESCRIPTION

State Highway Bridge 808 is a reinforced concrete slab with a structure length of 23' and a deck width of 24 feet . The structure serves as both a bridge and a water flow control for Wagamon's Pond. Adjustable wood plank gates retain the water in the pond and are raised or lowered along the concrete tracks by hand to control the volume of flow through the spillway. The parapet design consists of a series of open arches.

8. HISTORICAL DATA

Delaware Department of Transportation records state that Bridge 808 was built in 1900. Construction drawings or records do not survive. This early date is undocumented, and generally designates bridges which were built prior to being taken over by the Department, prior to 1935. Limited road construction and improvement activities were undertaken by the Sussex County Levy Court in the period before state and federal assistance became available in significant amounts for these purposes. During this period, county road and bridge construction was financed by local real estate taxes; especially in rural areas, where property values were lower than in the cities and suburbs, this funding proved insufficient to maintain the roads as motor traffic steadily increased. By 1917, rural Sussex County had only managed to finance 35 miles of macadam-surfaced roads. The passage of the Federal Aid Highway Act in 1916 set in motion a series of changes which would greatly accelerate the pace of road improvement in Delaware. The Act provided Federal matching funds to states for road construction up to 50% of cost or $10,000 per mile, and required that states set up an authoritative highway department with a professional staff. In response, the General Assembly passed the Highway Act of 1917, creating the Delaware State Highway Department. The road building program was further stimulated in 1919, when the State Aid Road Law enabled counties to issue bonds to match state funds. The 1919 law enabled each of Delaware's three counties to receive $250,000 annually in matching funds for road and bridge construction. Sussex County was the first to take full advantage of this program, accepting $250,000, matched with a bond issue, to construct 58 miles of road.

9. SIGNIFICANCE

Bridge 808 was likely constructed during the period from 1920-1930. This concrete slab bridge is an intact example of a combination bridge and water flow control structure. This dual-purpose type of structure was found predominantly in Kent and Sussex counties; these bridges serve as examples of creative design solutions to unusual site conditions, reflecting a specialized engineering response to the water management necessities of lower Delaware. Delaware DOT photographic archives for New Castle County bridges in the 1920s illustrated a number of examples of the type at that time. Although widely built throughout Delaware, only seven extant examples were surveyed. Additionally, the unusual parapet design of Bridge 808 consists of arched openings, a design not found on any other bridges surveyed in the region. Constructed by the county prior to the 1935 assimilation of county bridges by the Department, this bridge was associated with the early twentieth century development of the secondary road network in rural Sussex County.